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OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE MORTMAIN LAWS,

ACT OF SUPREMACY, &c.

WITH REFERENCE TO

BILLS NOW BEFORE PARLIAMENT:

OR,

POPERY OPPOSED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE,
AND SOCIAL HAPPINESS.

BY

JAMES LORD,

OF THE INNER TEMPLE, ESQ., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

LONDON:

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THE MORTMAIN LAWS, ETC.:

POPERY OPPOSED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIAL HAPPINESS.

Revised from the Protestant Magazine, March, 1846.

WE have before us three Bills which have been brought into Parliament early in the present session, for different purposes mentioned in their titles, as given below; but in effect taking away the securities once given to Protestants for their protection against Rome's intrigue and perfidy.

Our ancestors enacted laws for the preservation of themselves and their posterity. They were wise men. Their wisdom was bought dearly. It was the result of experience. They were good, as well as wise; nor less brave than good. Piety towards God, loyalty towards their sovereign, and sincerity towards one another, were their great characteristics—characteristics which form the essential elements of every truly noble mind.

The Titles of the Bills referred to, are as follows:—

- I. An Act to relieve Her Majesty's subjects from certain penalties and disabilities in regard to religious opinions.

This Bill was presented to the House of Lords by the Lord Chancellor, and ordered to be printed, Feb. 3, 1846.

It is not exclusively applicable to Roman Catholics. Its provisions extend to other Dissenters, and to the removal of certain Jewish disabilities.

- II. The Bill introduced by Mr. Watson, M.P. for Kinsale, on the 5th of February is, "A Bill for the further Repeal of Enactments imposing Pains and Penalties upon Her Majesty's Roman Catholic Subjects on account of their Religion."

- III. A Bill prepared and brought in by Lord John Manners, M.P. for Newark, and ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, the 2d of February, on the subject of the Mortmain laws, intended to favour bequests for pious and charitable purposes. It is intituled, "A Bill to alter and amend the Laws relating to the Disposition of Property for pious and charitable purposes."

Before we proceed to notice some of the enactments of these Bills, we must observe, that the penalties imposed by the laws now sought to be repealed, were not inflicted merely on account of the religion of Roman Catholics, but because, under the cloak of religion, they introduced principles and practices, opposed not only to true religion, but subversive of good order,

the peace of the country, and the throne itself. These were the real motives which led to many enactments. It was to protect the country from those who, in the language of one of the services of our Church, were such workers of iniquity that they turned "religion into rebellion, and faith into faction."

I. The first Bill is, for the repeal of certain provisions affecting persons professing the Jewish religion, and Dissenters, as well as Roman Catholics; the tendency of this Bill, as well as that introduced by Mr. Watson, is to repeal the Act of Supremacy itself, and to abrogate the form of oath, or declaration, provided by a more recent statute.

King Henry the Eighth was the first sovereign who shook off the yoke of slavery imposed by Papal Rome on this country. See Stat. 25 H. VIII. c. 12, s. 20.* By 1 Eliz. c. 1, all ecclesiastical jurisdiction was annexed to the crown, and it was ordained that no foreign potentate should exercise any power or authority in this kingdom. By these laws, the power of Rome was greatly broken, and the ancient jurisdiction ecclesiastical, was restored to the crown, to which it belonged before the usurping grasp of Rome had laid hold of it.

In the reign of William and Mary the then existing oaths of allegiance and supremacy were abrogated, and others were appointed to be taken and enforced under pain of disability, Stat. 1 W. & M. c. 8.

The oath of supremacy is principally calculated as a renunciation of the Pope's pretended authority; and no one can tell in what difficulties and perplexities the affairs of the nation, whether in civil or ecclesiastical matters, may be involved by the repeal or modification of the law upon this subject.

II. The Bill introduced by Mr. Watson, besides repealing the whole of some preceding Acts, and parts of others, repeals also the protective clauses of several provisions of the Act of 1829, "An Act for the Relief of His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects."

It repeals those sections whereby it is enacted, "That if any person, after the commencement of this Act, other than the person thereunto authorized by law, shall assume or use the name, style, or title of Archbishop of any province, Bishop of any bishopric, or Dean of any deanery in England or Ireland, he shall for every such offence forfeit and pay the sum of one hundred pounds."

By this, the assumption of the titles of Archbishop, Bishop, or Dean of any province, bishopric, or deanery, in England or Ireland, will henceforth be lawful; and a twelvemonth may not pass by, after the passing of this Bill, before we hear in England of a Roman Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, a

* Before this period the usurped civil power of the Bishop of Rome was so keenly felt, that the statute of *præmunire*, 16 Rich. II., c. 5, was passed. See Stephen's Comm. vol. iv. p. 212.

Roman Catholic Archbishop of York, and Roman Catholic Bishops and Deans for every bishopric and deanery in England as well as in Ireland.*

It further repeals, "Also, so much of the said last-mentioned Act, whereby it is enacted, that if any Roman Catholic ecclesiastic, or any member of any of the orders, communities, or societies, hereinafter mentioned, shall, after the commencement of this Act, exercise any of the rites or ceremonies of the Roman Catholic religion, or wear the habits of his order, save within the usual places of worship, of the Roman Catholic religion, or in private houses, such ecclesiastic or other person shall, being thereof convicted by due course of law, forfeit for every such offence the sum of fifty pounds." This provision contemplates public processions in all our streets, the elevation of the host, and all the abominations of Popery.

"Also, so much of the said last-mentioned Act as imposes penalties upon any person holding any judicial, civil, or corporate office, who shall resort or be present at any place of worship in England or Ireland, other than that of the United Church of England and Ireland, or in Scotland, other than that of the Church of Scotland as by law established, in the robe, gown, or other peculiar habit of his office, or attend thereat with the ensign or insignia, or any part thereof, of or belonging to such his office."

This seems adapted for gaining over liberal, and latitudinarian statesmen, judicial, civil, and corporate officers, to attend Popish chapels, in the insignia of their office. Thus in future we may behold in various borough towns, the mayor, aldermen, or burgesses, &c., lending all their weight and influence to advance and restore the power of Rome,—marching as victims, whilst they think themselves independent, and preparing, one by one, the links of that chain, which shall hereafter rivet slavery and misery upon themselves and their posterity.

It then goes on to enact,

"And also, so much of the said last-mentioned Act as relates to the gradual suppression and final prohibition of Jesuits and members of other religious orders, communities or societies of the Church of Rome, bound by monastic or religious vows, and resident within the kingdom, and the coming and returning of Jesuits or members of any such religious orders, communities or societies into this realm, and the registration of Jesuits or members of any such orders, communities or societies, and the admittance of persons to become Jesuits or regular ecclesiastics or brothers or members of any such religious orders, communities or societies, and the administering or taking of any oaths, vows or engagements, purporting or intending to bind the persons taking the same to the rules, ordinances or ceremonies of any such religious orders, communities or societies, and the granting of licenses in writing, signed by any one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, being a Protestant, and the several misdemeanors in the premises respectively created or enacted or declared by the said Act, and

* See Protestant Magazine, March, 1845.

the fines or forfeitures of monies, pains and penalties of banishment and transportation beyond seas for term of life and all other the forfeitures, pains, penalties, punishments and disabilities thereby respectively in that behalf enacted against all persons respectively offending in the premises, or otherwise provided or enacted or ensuing for or in respect of or as incidental to the same."

This is to legalize what is at present unlawful, viz., the establishment, coming and returning of the Jesuits, and members of other religious orders of the Church of Rome, bound by monastic vows.*

III. The Bill introduced by Lord John Manners on the subject of the Mortmain laws, deserves especial notice. †

Some of the enactments contained in it are most mischievous in their tendency and details, and such as ought to be opposed, not only by sound-hearted Protestants, but by enlightened Roman Catholics themselves. ‡ There are concentrated in them the essence and elements of many evils.

By Section I., the whole of the 9th Geo. II. c. 36, is to be repealed, whilst the provisions substituted for it are comparatively useless.

Section II. gives parties the power of disposing of any kind of property generally for religious and charitable purposes, by will, deed, "*or other suitable conveyance.*" What this "*other suitable conveyance*" may be, is left to conjecture.

Section III. provides that where more than half the donor's, testator's, or grantor's property is given for such purposes as those contemplated by the Act, every deed or will, &c., shall be executed by such testator, donor, or grantor, in the presence of, and be attested by, at least three credible witnesses, one being the "medical attendant of such testator, donor, or grantor, who shall then certify on the back of every such will, deed, or other instrument or conveyance, that such testator, donor, or grantor is, according to the best of their judgment and belief, of a sound disposing mind, and fully acquainted with the contents of such will, deed, or other instrument or conveyance, and that he has executed the same freely and deliberately, without any undue solicitation or influence made to or practised upon him in that behalf."

This may at first appear a most safe and satisfactory precaution; but on closer investigation, the imaginary security, like a dissolving view, passes away, and presents to us a different picture.

* A Correspondent informs us that Mr. Hornyold, the head of an old Roman Catholic family in Worcestershire, does not wait for the repeal of this enactment: he has just built a convent in Blackmore Park "dedicated to Almighty God under the patronage of the B.V.M. and St. Alphonse," at which four foreign priests are expected to take up their residence.

† Though for the present rejected, the Noble Lord has declared his determination to bring it forward again.

‡ The case of Mr. Eastwood, a Roman Catholic layman, may be still fresh in the recollection of many our readers; at least in the north of England it is not yet forgotten.

A Roman Catholic doctor, a Roman Catholic penitent, and a Roman Catholic priest would not find much difficulty in complying with or evading these requirements. But it is to be observed, further, that these precautions, impotent as they are, are only intended to apply where more than half of the donor's, testator's, or grantor's property is to be disposed of.

So that one-half of the real and personal property of every person in the United Kingdom, not under civil or natural disability, may be henceforth given to Roman Catholic purposes without any such formality. The following may serve as an illustration of the mode in which spiritual influence is used for the purposes of temporal aggrandizement of the individual, or Church, or both :—

In a case which recently occurred in Dublin, John Caldbeck, the *father* of the testatrix, had entered a *caveat* against the will of his daughter, Anne Frances Caldbeck, who was a person of a religious turn of mind, and had made a will by which she directed her property, amounting to about 2,000*l.*, to be expended by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, in the foundation of a branch of the religious community called “the Sisters of Charity.” It provided also for every other property of the testator being applied to the same purpose. *Dr. Meyler*, Roman Catholic Dean of Dublin, was her confessor, and was consulted as to the disposition of her property; a will was accordingly drawn up, and executed in the house of *Dr. Meyler*, in Westland Row.

The testatrix also expressed a wish that a sum should be set apart, to procure masses to be said for her soul after death.

The testatrix had lived in the house of her brother for thirty years, and the most unbounded affection had long subsisted between them. It is remarkable, in this case, that no original instruction ever came from the testatrix at all, but everything was managed by *Dr. Meyler*, the confessor, who had been the spiritual adviser of the testatrix for twenty-five years; and the will was executed at his house in Westland-row, after attending morning prayers.

But the spiritual adviser ought never to have been a party to the drawing up of a will like the one in question.

In reply to a question asked by the learned Judge, as to whether it was an every day occurrence for a lady to go to her confessor, and arrange with him a plan for leaving every farthing of her property in charity? *Dr. Wiley* replied, that *it had often occurred before*, and that it was the commonest thing in the country for people to employ priests under similar circumstances.*

* See Case of the Very Rev. W. Meyler, R.C. Dean of Dublin, promovent, John Caldbeck, impugnant; Elisabeth Thunder, intervenient. This trial, which took place in the Prerogative Court, Dublin, is reported at length, in the “Statesman, and Dublin Christian Record,” of February 10, 1846. The following epitome of some of the main features of it, is thus given in a number of that Journal, of February 17 :—“A lady named Caldbeck, possessed of

Section IV. provides that all deeds and instruments, not being testamentary dispositions, shall be enrolled within three months of their execution, and shall be irrevocable, except where power of revocation is reserved.

Section V. contains provisions and reservations in favour of creditors, &c.

With Section VI. we must trespass on the attention of our readers at length. It is as follows :—

“ And be it enacted, That if after the making of any such gift or grant for such uses or purposes as aforesaid, any such testator, donor, or grantor shall have died, leaving any parent, wife, child, or grandchild, who by reason and in consequence of such gift or grant shall have been left destitute or insufficiently provided for, it shall be lawful for every such parent, wife, child, or grandchild to apply to the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper for the time being, by petition in that behalf setting forth all the circumstances of his or her case; and thereupon the said Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper shall forthwith proceed to inquire into the facts so alleged in such petition in such manner as to him shall seem most expedient; and if, upon such inquiry, the said

property amounting to 2,400*l.*, died on the 1st of November, 1844, and by her will bequeathed her whole property to the Rev. Doctor Meyler, of Westland-row Chapel, and to the Popish Archbishop of Dublin, in trust for the benefit of certain Roman Catholic charities. Miss Caldbeck, we may here remark, had been on the most affectionate terms with her brother, in whose house she lived for thirty years. She had executed another will prepared by her own solicitor, and in it had made provision for her brother; but of this will no trace was forthcoming at the time of trial. The second—or what we may term, the priest's will, was prepared under the directions of Dr. Meyler, the confessor of the testatrix, and by his attorney—by his confidential adviser—but a man totally unknown to Miss Caldbeck. This professional gentleman drew up a will from verbal instructions, and allowed several months to elapse between the preparation and execution of the deed. The latter took place, not in the house of Miss Caldbeck's brother, but at the chapel in Westland-row, in the presence of the confessor, his coadjutor, and confidential attorney. Moreover, the custody of the document was not permitted to remain with the testatrix, so that she could have the power of destroying or obliterating it whenever she pleased, but it was kept in the possession of Dr. Meyler, who took good care to preserve the most profound silence on the subject.

“ On carefully examining the various points connected with, or bearing on the case, the learned Judge decided—first, that the testatrix was of sound mind at the time of making her will; secondly, that there was no evidence of improper influence sufficient to set the will aside. He refused, however, to grant the defendant's costs, on the grounds that the next of kin was fully justified in coming forward, as he had done, in the suit, and that the defendants had not conducted the suit in a fair manner. The law of the case, then, has been with the Rev. Dr. Meyler, but few will affirm that his cause was sustained by justice. The influence of the priest and confessor was exercised for the benefit of his Church, not for personal interest, and upon this plea was he borne harmless. There are delicate modes of obtaining money, which no law can reach, and of one of the most efficacious amongst them did the Rev. Mr. Meyler avail himself, to the comfort of his co-religionists. Well, indeed, did the learned Judge remark, “ that clergymen of all religious persuasions had higher and more important duties to attend to than the construction of wills; and the less they dabbled in personal concerns the better.” But such a doctrine would suit neither the views nor the interests of the Popish Church. ¹¹² Separate her from temporal affairs—confine her within the bounds of truth—and the fabric of error, superstition, and tyranny must crumble to atoms.

Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper shall be fully satisfied of the truth of the said fact, then it shall be lawful for him to make such order as to him shall seem reasonable for allowing to every such parent, wife, child, or grandchild, for his, her, or their life or lives, or for any shorter period or periods, so much and such portion of the proceeds or profits arising from the property, estates, or effects so given or granted as aforesaid, as may be sufficient for the support and maintenance of such parent, wife, child, or grandchild during any such period as aforesaid, and from time to time to alter or annul such order, and to make such other or further orders and regulations in that behalf as the justice of the case and the wants of the several parties interested may seem to him to require."

From this it appears that the framers of this Bill are conscious that undue influence may be exercised, and that this Bill, as to "bequests for *pious* and charitable purposes," will give to many under the influence of false religion, a power which they will exercise for the purposes of leaving the wife,—the child,—the parent,—destitute of the provision which should have been made for them. Nor is this all, for when under the influence of priestly rule the deluded penitent shall have given up his property for prayers—which may never be said—and masses—which may never be offered—neglecting the scriptural duty of honouring and maintaining a parent—shall have impoverished his wife, and beggared his offspring—the wife, the parent, the children have this consolation left, that they may apply to the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper, who *may* make order to allow them for life or shorter period some allowance sufficient for their "support or maintenance"!!

But, as though that might not be sufficiently galling to those who may thus be reduced from affluence to penury, the same or any future Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper may alter or even annul such order. The power is quite discretionary with the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper; and who can say, unless Protestants more actively exert themselves, how long it may be before it shall be lawful for a Roman Catholic to be Lord Chancellor? What prospect, let each one ask himself, would there then be for a Protestant to receive any portion of his alienated patrimony? Who can deny that thus great evils may be inflicted? Who does not perceive that many of them flow naturally from the system of the Church of Rome? Thus it is, and ever will be. False doctrines lead to errors in practice. An erroneous theology becomes the parent of an erroneous morality, and an erroneous policy.

With the figment of purgatory to frighten her penitent—and the more impious figment of masses to redeem from purgatorial fire—Rome has long traded in the souls of men.

Unwilling to permit eternal life to flow as the free gift of God to all who, by a true and living faith in a crucified Saviour, come to Him,—she would prescribe other modes of access, and other mediators, and repeated sacrifices, despising the plain

language of Scripture and overlooking the finished work of Christ Jesus, who by one offering "hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," (Heb. x. 14.) Thus she proceeds, seeking to obscure by her dark traditions, the splendour of "the everlasting Gospel;"—and then taking away the Scriptures from the people, lest her errors should be detected—inculcating the existence of purgatory—that prayers and masses may help the souls detained therein—and then making it a pretext for obtaining the money of her penitents, and acquiring an ascendancy over their property and persons.

Sec. VII., and last, gives power to trustees under certain circumstances to apply surplus of property to other objects of the same nature.

Such are some of the provisions of these Bills. Is it not then our bounden duty to interpose and prevent measures so powerful for evil, so impotent for good, being carried into effect?

But worse measures than these are in store for us, if we do not bestir ourselves. It may be the *expedient* policy of those who have hitherto been reckoned the leaders of the two great parties* in the State to keep back for the present, and till after the next general election, their intention of endowing the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. Such a measure is, however, in contemplation; and, if the electors do not make the protection of the Protestant institutions of the country a rallying-point at the next general election, they must blame themselves hereafter for suffering, by their own supineness, such a measure to be carried into effect. The confidence heretofore placed in statesmen can no longer with safety be reposed. Public men have themselves to thank if, having deserted their principles, those who value principle should take security against future treachery. The measures now before Parliament in favour of Popery will, if they are adopted, tend to inflict deep injury on the constitution, if they do not bring about a total disunion or destruction of Church and State.

We would indulge the hope that many who seem favourers of these Bills have been so without fully entering into their real scope, tendency, and effect.

There is scarcely a Continental power that is not more protected than our own country against the plots and machinations of Rome.

And it is most important to be borne in mind, that many of the ancient laws complained of in our statute book on the subject of Popery were enacted at a time when the whole people of this country, with but few exceptions, were Roman Catholics.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy themselves felt oftentimes the

* It is remarkable to observe how each of these parties—successively vying with one another in patronizing Popery to strengthen their own position—have been broken up and dispersed by Popery—and exhibit their *disjecta membra*, as trophies to the power of Papal Rome.

tyranny of foreign rule, in the person of the Bishop of Rome; and the Roman Catholic Kings, surrounded by their Roman Catholic Barons, and their Roman Catholic Commons, found it essential for the safety of themselves and the well-being of the State, to make laws for their own protection.

But, if a Roman Catholic sovereign, legislature, and people, thus found restrictions necessary, how much more must they be so to Protestants, against whom the Church of Rome declares a most unmitigated hostility,—whose power she would destroy,—whose policy she would overturn,—and whose very existence she would annihilate!

We are glad to see that the attention of the public is being roused to these points, and that people are beginning to ask themselves, whether Popery is so desirable a thing as represented, and whether, whilst she speaks toleration and equality, she is not seeking her own supremacy, and our subjugation.

In the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Mortmain laws, last session, the following evidence was given by the Bishop of London:—

“His Lordship is asked, (Q. 570,) ‘Does your experience as a parish clergyman lead you to apprehend undue influence with persons, particularly in sickness, from clergymen or others, for the purpose of obtaining grants or bequests for the Church?’ ‘Certainly not. There is nothing in the principles of our Church which need lead any person to entertain such an apprehension, even in theory, and I believe in practice, it is equally groundless. . . . I think in respect to the Roman Catholic clergy there would be great reason to apprehend this influence, because the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is this:—It is confessedly taught in the writings of both Testaments that there are three most convenient modes of washing out the stains of sin—alms, prayers, fastings; and that it is altogether reasonable that one of these fountains should flow abundantly when the others fail and are dried up.’ (571.) ‘And, therefore, if dying persons are persuaded that by leaving large bequests for charitable purposes, or for the purpose of having so many masses said for the repose of their souls, they can wash out the stains of sin, or escape a certain period of the pains of purgatory, there would be great danger of unjust disherision. The danger of this is of course much less in our own Church, which teaches no such doctrine, but merely instructs the clergyman, when visiting a dying man, to exhort him to settle his worldly affairs, and to be liberal to the poor. I may add that I have been informed on authority, which I believe to be credible, that an eminent Roman Catholic of the present day in England said, that if the Mortmain Act was repealed, he would require no other measure in favour of the Roman Catholic Church.’

“Mr. BROTHERTON.—Is your Lordship of that opinion?—No; I have too much confidence in the intrinsic truth and vigour of the Reformed Church to be much afraid of it myself.

“Sir G. GREY.—Do you think that he meant that endowments in landed property would be so rapidly created?—Yes.

“Mr. MILNES.—Does not your Lordship think that public opinion

would act very strongly at the present time against any such abuse of the liberty? Might I be allowed to ask how public opinion would affect that?—I think that a religious principle, a principle of truth on the part of those who had property to dispose of, might operate; a Roman Catholic might be anxious to provide for the dissemination of what he considered the truth, and other members of the Church might be equally anxious to provide for the dissemination of what they considered the truth. The one is more accessible in his dying moments to the arguments which I have described than the other, to whom such an argument could not with consistency be used. . . . The difference between their Church and our own is of so essential and vital a kind, that I am not at present prepared to consent to any measure which shall increase the facility they now possess of advancing the boundaries of their Church in this country.

“Mr. SHAW.—Does any possible way to prevent it occur to your Lordship's mind?—The Committee will be so good as to understand that I am looking at the question throughout, in its bearings on the Church. *It is only in the last few years that we have begun to think about such matters.*”

Here is the melancholy fact—a fact, however, which, while it discovers to us the cause of our weakness, points out also the source of our future strength.

The truth is, that till very recently the distinctive marks of Popery and Protestantism have been unheeded, if not unknown, by the great proportion of our fellow-countrymen. They have never, or but rarely, and then superficially, formed a portion of education either in public or private seminaries, the public schools, colleges, and universities of the land, nor, as they ought to have done, points of examination before admission into holy orders.

But let it not be supposed we are referring, in these remarks, to the Church of England alone. No. Every body of Dissenters seems to have been equally asleep on these points.

The fault of our present position is not with one man, or any distinct body of men; it seems to have resulted from the apathy of all, and to require the united efforts of all, to obviate the evil state of things at present existing. Popery was forgotten by many. By others she was thought to be dead, and by more to be harmless. From the extreme of hatred, we seem as a Church and nation to have leaped to the opposite extreme, without halting in the happy medium, where we ought permanently to have taken our position, with a Christian firmness and moderation, alike removed from bigotry on the one hand, and an unprincipled Latitudinarianism on the other.

In the course of the present session, when the propriety of bringing in a certain Bill was before the House, Lord John Russell thus expressed himself:—“He thought that to keep up a punishment for assuming Episcopal titles was puerile and childish; and, with respect to the religious orders, to prohibit them, and to make some of them, as the Jesuits, liable, as in

some cases they now were, to transportation, while these enactments were not carried into effect, was on the one side intolerance on the part of Parliament, and on the other side they were very inefficient, so long as they were not carried into effect. Whether Parliament ought not to repeal that part of the law which related to monastic orders altogether, or whether they should take the same securities which they required from Protestant Dissenters, and enact that those houses should be registered and visited, he was not then prepared to say. But this *question of religious orders was a great question, because it had been seen what results in various parts of the world the residence of these religious orders had led to, not because they had employed themselves in the practice of religious virtues, but because they had made themselves religious bodies interfering in the affairs of State.*"

In the prospect of an approaching general election,* it is the duty of Protestants to be prepared—to stand firm to their principles—to be determined to return men who will vote in favour of the principles of eternal truth—the principles of the Bible.

Human policy may vary; that word changes not.

Human wisdom may err; that alone is truth without any mixture of error.

To the late and present movements in favour of Popery, we may apply the following language; placing only the Roman Catholic for the Puritanical Members of Parliament, and venturing to express our hope that Protestant statesmen will derive from it a lesson of practical wisdom.

"The party were not disheartened, though their measures were sometimes defeated in the Commons, and sometimes rejected in the Lords. As the slightest introduction of morbid matter into the human system suffices to induce disease or death, so, when destructive opinions are once avowed in a legislative body, they continue to work till the crisis is produced; the very strength of evil consisting in its restlessness and activity. The Puritanical Members were always at their post, always alert, and on the watch for every occasion; their opponents too often absented themselves from the House, wearied by pertinacity, or disgusted by violence. Many fatally persuaded themselves that their individual presence could contribute little to the preservation of Government, but advantage was taken of their absence to carry the most mischievous questions. Thus a handful of determined voters, first by address and vigilance, then by intimidation and the help of the mob, succeeded in making Parliament speak their language, and many of the best and noblest Members sacrificed at last their fortunes and their lives, defending unsuccessfully in the *field*, that cause which, if they had never relaxed from their duty in the *Senate*, would never have been brought to the decision of arms."—*Southey's Book of the Church*.

* See Article in January No. of the "Protestant Magazine," on the approaching elections.

Oh! that our Protestant senators would take warning from this too true, and melancholy picture; would that the electors throughout the empire would take warning from it; that our hierarchy, and every member of the Church, would be admonished by it. This applies equally in principle to elections. The blessings of Providence are not promised to the slothful.

In Popery we have a powerful antagonist.

It is a grand system, or rather a great conspiracy, against the freedom and happiness of men and nations. It arrogates to itself almost an entire dominion over him and his property, from the cradle to the grave; nor leaves him there. It seeks to penetrate the eternal world, and by professing to have a control over the ideal sufferings of a middle state, would persuade, or intimidate men to part with the whole of their goods in this world, to buy off the penalties of the world to come. No rank, no grade of life, is free from its insidious approach, its tyrannical rule. It commences with infancy. In the dawn of early life, it is associated with the heart's first feelings, and like other superstitions impresses a stamp upon the mind which succeeding events cannot obliterate, and nothing short of the intervention of Almighty grace can remove.

Speaking of the influence of the priests, how early it is acquired, how closely it applies, and how durably it lasts, a modern writer thus proceeds, as to the influence of priests upon marriage:—*

"What an advantage has he in being able to take her quite young in the convent, where they have placed her, to be the first to take in hand her young soul, and to be the first to exercise upon her the earliest severity and also the earliest indulgence, which is so akin to affectionate tenderness, to be the father and friend of a child taken so soon from her mother's arms. The confidant of her first thoughts will long be associated with her private reveries. He has had an especial and singular privilege which the husband may envy. What? Why, the virginity of the soul and the first fruits of the will.

This is the man, of whom, young bachelors, you must ask the girl in marriage before you speak to her parents. Do not deceive yourselves, or you will lose all chance. You shake your heads, proud children of the age; you think you can never be induced to humble yourselves thus far. All I hope then is, that you may be able to live single, and wed philosophy. Otherwise, I can see you even now, in spite of all your fine speeches, gliding stealthily, sneaking like a hound or a wolf into the church and kneeling down before the priest. There they were lying in wait for you, and there they catch you. You had not foreseen it. Now you are a lover, poor young man, and will do whatever they wish. I only wish that this girl bought so dearly may be really yours. But what with that mother and that priest the same influence, though diminished for a moment, will soon receive its

* See Michelet's work, "Priests, Women, and Families," page 232. The Jesuits, priests and nuns, have now 200,000 boys, and 600,000 girls, in the course of education in France. Let Englishman who love their country look to the education question.

strength. You will have a wife *minus* heart and soul, and you will understand, when too late, that he who now gives her away, knows well how to keep her." *

Pompous in external ceremonies, but destitute of intrinsic good, the Church of Rome would allure to her standard, the admirers of theatrical effect. But it is no easy yoke which she imposes on her followers. It is not the less severe for being spiritual.

The power spoken of is not ideal, it is positive, actual power, descending to the minute transactions of private life, dictating the terms on which social intercourse shall be carried on.

We read, as follows, in a letter from Lucerne, of the 28th February:—

"A new infraction of the treaties in force between France and Switzerland, has just taken place here. M. Jacques Erhard, a young French merchant, established in this town, being on the point of marrying a young lady of one of the first families of the place, applied to the curé to celebrate the marriage. The latter refused, unless M. Erhard and the young lady for some time went through certain religious observances of an exceedingly rigorous character. This M. Erhard refused to comply with, and, proceeding to Strassburg, his native town, he had the civil marriage effected by the mayor, and the newly-married couple immediately returned to Lucerne. The day after their arrival, the director of the police sent a letter to M. Erhard, calling on him, as the civil marriage was not recognized in Switzerland, and contrary to the manners of the people, to get himself married in the church. M. Erhard at once applied to the curé to officiate, but this ecclesiastic replied, that he should still impose the same conditions as before, adding another, 'that the newly-married couple should separate altogether until they had received the nuptial benediction.' M. Erhard refused, and declared that, such being the case, he should renounce the idea of being married in church. Some days after he received another notice from the director of police, that, unless he was married in the church, he would be expelled from Lucerne. M. Erhard, in his turn, signified to the head of the police that he was a French citizen, and that, by existing treaties, he was entitled to reside in Switzerland, without being restrained in any way in his religious belief or observances. The director of the police having maintained his decision, M. Erhard has addressed a complaint to the French Ambassador at Berne."—*Morning Herald*, Feb. 5, 1846.

We see, then, sufficient in each of the three Bills to cause

* "Let us add to this chapter a fact which (being compared with what we have said about ecclesiastical discipline, page 203) inclines us to think that the clergy do not lose sight of the girls who are brought up in the convents under their direction. A friend of mine, whose high position and character, render his testimony very important, lately told me that having placed a young relative of his in a convent, he had heard from the nuns, that they sent to Rome the names of the pupils who distinguished themselves the most. The centralization of such private information about the daughters of the leading families of the Catholic world must indeed facilitate many combinations, and be of especial service to Ultramontane politics. The Jesu if it were so would be a vast marriage office."

apprehension in the minds of Protestants. The practical operations of Popery, in ancient and modern times, call upon us to be wise and careful, nor rashly to remove what the Church of Rome may call *penalties*, but which we must ever regard as *securities* essential to protect ourselves from the full development of her system in this country.

On the various important points—too briefly touched upon in this article—we are prevented from now saying more. Enough has, we trust, been said to call attention to the subjects. We have adduced facts in support of our assertions—facts collected from a variety of quarters.

We must here leave our readers to make their own comments. With reference to the Bills before Parliament, we would call upon all, to make themselves well acquainted with the nature of them, and to petition against their being passed into law.

It may be that Her Majesty's Government will not give their entire support to these measures. But will they, or those who may succeed them, present a strenuous opposition? Will they, as the Ministers of the Crown, as the confidential advisers of Her Majesty, point out the impolicy, the danger, the ruinous tendency of such measures?

Will they, as those to whom, by long-established practice, the people of Great Britain have been accustomed to look up, as the guardians and protectors of their rights and liberties, see that these invaluable blessings are not trampled in the dust?

Yes, they will, if the electors of the United Kingdom, and all right-minded men, resolve at once to shake off the *incubus* of Popery, which has been so long depressing the energies of our country.

They have the *power*, if they have the *will* to do it.

What forced on Catholic Emancipation, as it was erroneously termed? What the Reform Bill? What the Emancipation of Slaves? What the present efforts to repeal the Corn-laws and protective duties? What but opinion erroneous, misled, in some instances, and despised in all; till, like smouldering fire, gathering strength from being neglected, it melted, and consumed by its intensity, every element of opposition.

Each evil principle seems now rapidly in motion for the accomplishment of its evil purpose, and every antagonistic power in the cause of virtue, good order, and religion,—evoked from their long slumber—should be wisely, rapidly, resolutely marshalled in defence of all that we hold dear for time—precious for eternity.



